



InterACT

Church and Community Partnership

Charity (CIO) number: 1171402

INTERACT CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

Annual Report 2020

www.interact.uk.net

A Mosaic for Meanwood and After-School Sessions

At the beginning of the year, we were enjoying running after-school clubs with children aged 7-11 and their families.

Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown in March, we never managed to complete the full variety of activities we had planned, but we did fit in some "fast food home made" cooking sessions, fun adventures at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, and the creation of a mosaic to go around the door at Meanwood Community Centre.

It was so exciting to see the mosaic installed at the end of 2020 by Seagulls Reuse, the group who helped us put it together. We weren't able to come together and celebrate as we wanted, but we've loved walking by and celebrating all the different symbols of what Meanwood means to us.



Adapting to COVID-19

Of course, much of the year was about responding to the changing situation around us. All our regular groups closed – sadly this was permanent in the case of Youth Club and Play and Learn, although there is still some life to come from these groups in other forms going forward.



We worked with Leeds City Council and an organisation called Voluntary Action Leeds (“a charity that supports communities by helping people and organisations that do good in Leeds”) to help ensure residents in and around the Moortown and Meanwood Ward were able to access food and support as the pandemic progressed. We also maintained links with those already known to us, made

welfare visits, phone calls, shopped and responded as many various needs arose.

Hundreds of volunteers signed up to be part of the local response. It was good to work with so many new people, without whom we genuinely could not have helped all the people from our area who requested it over the months. It was also a little strange working, often intensely, with people we still have never met in physical space. We look forward to the time when we can finally all meet together face to face.

We were able to run a one-off Meanwood Olympics family fun day, great for helping children get used to connecting again (even if at a distance), in readiness for the September return to school, and for a brief window of time, we



lockdown has eased, I've found the idea of going out and returning to a sense of normality quite difficult."

The campaign was full of ideas of things neighbours and friends could safely do to connect with one another again and was something other projects picked up and used in other areas, including outside Leeds.

Meanwood Men Shed

We'd been planning to set up a Men Shed in Meanwood for some time and had hoped to launch this new initiative in July. Men sheds are dedicated spaces for men to meet, and they can play an important role in helping to combat isolation and loneliness amongst men in the areas where they're established.

Although the official launch for ours was put on hold, we were able to work with a small group of men and with Meanwood Valley Urban Farm to start preparing space for us to quite literally put up a shed.

The circumstances have been painful and challenging, with lives lost and much loneliness and despair. So we have been honoured and proud to facilitate hundreds of local people to make thousands of shopping trips, welfare calls, prescription pick-ups, dogs walks and more – a community pulling together and bringing hope.

Based at the farm, Meanwood Men Shed will evolve and be shaped by those who become part of it.



Clearing old buildings to make way for the new

Sheds are about meeting like-minded people and having someone to share your worries

with. They are about having fun, sharing skills and knowledge with like-minded people and gaining a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. As a by-product of all of that they reduce isolation and feelings of loneliness, they allow men to

*deal with mental health challenges more easily and remain independent, they rebuild communities and in many cases, they save men's lives.
(menssheds.org.uk)*

Love Meanwood

Autumn brought the launch of a 2030 Vision for Meanwood. It was launched under the banner of Love Meanwood, a project of resident group Meanwood Valley Partnership. We were pleased to be part of the steering group over the two years while the vision was being developed.

The aim of Love Meanwood is to empower and enable people from Meanwood to take part in improving our community. We asked as many people who live in Meanwood as possible for their thoughts and ideas on how we can improve Meanwood and the public spaces in our local area.

Of course, the vision wasn't launched in the way we'd planned - in the end it moved online and

was far more low key than we had imagined it to be. However, the document can be accessed online or printed for those who request it. It explains the process we followed and what we have learnt about Meanwood. It is also where we introduce three focus areas that emerged from the consultation process. Each focus area has been broken down further into three projects that contribute to achieving the vision. Printed copies of the document can be ordered but are free to read at [www.lovemeanwood.org.uk](http://www lovemeanwood.org.uk)

LOVE
MEAN  **WOOD**
#lovemeanwood

Christmas

Hundreds of food bags, Christmas gifts, blankets and hampers were taken out to local people of all ages in the run up to Christmas. We also raised over £1000 from Reverse Advent Calendar donations, which were converted to Aldi food vouchers, and received many donations of food through Churches Together, Meanwood Primary School and individual donors. It made a big difference during a particularly difficult Christmas period, where families and friends were not able to come

together and finances were strained by the pandemic.



What next?

2021 will bring many new opportunities and challenges of its own. The Moortown and Meanwood Hub work will carry on until the end of June, and we will continue to adapt this emergency response according to the community's needs. We will also be looking at more sustainable ways of ensuring local people have access to food and other basic provisions.

Sadly, neither Play and Learn nor Monday Night Youth Club will return as InterACT projects. However, we're delighted that our friends at Meanwood Valley Pre-School are taking up the reins of Play and Learn and will build this into their existing provisions in the community. And we are now working together with other organisations to develop a **new partnership youth project** for the

area. We look forward to sharing how this develops over the coming year.

Our Supporters

From practical volunteering to people who pray, to those who help us communicate across the area, there are many who give to us in many different ways. If you would like to sign up to our newsletter to find out more about what we do on a regular basis and how you can be involved, please email vanessa@interact.uk.net, or call 07961 535 767.

Financially, activities this year have been funded by: Leeds City Council (Inner North East and Inner North West Community Committee Funding; COVID-19 Community Hub Funding; Housing Leeds through our local Housing Advisory Panel; MICE money); The National Lottery Community Fund

(with thanks to the Government for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund); Charities Aid Foundation; Leeds Community Foundation Stay Well This Winter Fund and COVID Resilience Fund; Leeds South & West Methodist Circuit; Stainbeck United Reformed Church; Meanwood Valley Baptist Church; St. Matthew's Church; and Holy Trinity Church. We are also thankful to The Barn Meanwood for a regular supply of great coffee to our community café.

We are grateful for a number of donations and standing orders from individual donors, local businesses and groups, including Maria's Café.

Structure

InterACT is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission, number 1171402.

We are formally a partnership of five congregations: Holy Trinity, Meanwood; Meanwood Valley Baptist Church; St. Matthew's, Chapel Allerton; Stainbeck United Reformed Church; and Meanwood Methodists.

www.holytrinitymeanwood.org.uk; www.mvbc.org.uk;

www.saintmatthewschurch.com; www.stainbeckurc.org.uk;

www.lswmethodists.org.uk/meanwoodmethodistchurch.aspx

Can you help us?

The number of activities we now run on a regular basis has significantly grown over the years, and we are an established and well-known part of our local community. We rely on an amazing group of volunteers to make this happen, and we would love more people to join the team! There are so many ways to get involved, from setting up equipment to chatting to folk who attend our activities and much in between. Please get in touch.

And if you feel you can support us financially, please complete the form below and send to us at Stainbeck Church, Stainbeck Road, LS7 2PP. Like all charities, we spend a considerable amount of our time looking for funding when we would rather be getting on with working in the community. Regular donations are particularly helpful because they enable us to budget more easily.

If you can help, enclose one-off donations with this form. Information needed for standing orders and bank transfers is included, for those who prefer to set this up themselves. We'd be very grateful if you let us know you're planning to give in this way. Thank you.

InterACT Financial Giving Form

Your name:

Your Address:

Phone and email:

I am giving a one-off gift of £_____ and enclose my donation

I will be making a donation of £_____ by BACS

I am setting up a standing order mandate with my bank for the following amount £ _____ per _____

I would prefer InterACT to send me a paper copy of a standing order mandate so that they can help me set this up with my bank

Our Bank Details

Acc. Name: InterACT Church and

Community Partnership; **Acc. No.:** 00030580; **Sort Code:** 40-52-40;

Name of Bank: CAF Bank; **Address:** 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19

Gift Aid: If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim back 25p in every pound that you donate, making your gift go further. It can make a big difference. Our Gift Aid form is on the next page.



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Charity Number : 1171402

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

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Charity Gift Aid Declaration

(use for one-off donations)

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ to InterACT Church and Community Partnership

(use for multiple donations)

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to InterACT Church and Community Partnership

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and / or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details

Title _____ First name or initial(s) _____

Surname _____

Full home address _____

Postcode _____ Date _____

Please notify the charity if you: • want to cancel this declaration • change your name or home address • no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self – Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.